

## APPENDIX B - NFMA CONSISTENCY

Because this analysis involves vegetative management treatments, NFMA compliance items covered under 36 CFR 219.27(b) "Vegetative Manipulation", 36 CFR 219.27(c) "Silvicultural Practices", and 36 CFR 219.27(d) "Even-aged Management" is summarized below:

### **Vegetative Manipulation**

219.27 (b)(1): "Be best suited to the multiple use goals established for the area with potential environmental, biological, cultural resource, aesthetic, engineering, and economic impacts, as stated in the regional guides and forest plans".

In Chapter 3, each resource is evaluated as to how each alternative addresses multiple use goals that are inherent in the Forest Plan standards and guides (S&G). As described in these effects discussions, all action alternatives comply with Forest Plan S&G. The Forest Plan S&G are a product of the Regional guides developed specifically for the Manti-La Sal National Forest.

219.27 (b)(2): "Assure that lands can be adequately restocked as provided in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, except where permanent openings are created for wildlife habitat improvement, vistas, recreation uses and similar practices."

No permanent openings would be created by harvest activities under any action alternative. Experience from forests of similar elevation and habitat types indicates stands in the project area requiring regeneration activity following implementation of the Action Alternatives can be successfully regenerated in accordance with the National Forest Management Act (NFMA 1976) requirements. All created openings will be regenerated within five years through natural and artificial regeneration methods, as well as utilizing existing advanced regeneration in order to adequately restock areas.

219.27 (b)(3): "Not be chosen primarily because they will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest output of timber, although these factors will be considered."

Economics and outputs are considered in the analysis, but not in detailed analysis (see 2.3.3 Other Issues). However, an economic analysis was completed and part of appendix F and the planning record.

219.27 (b)(4): "Be chosen after considering the effects on residual trees and adjacent stands."

Areas proposed for treatment under the Action Alternatives were those most impacted by the spruce beetles, at the highest risk of future loss, and/or had potential to put other stands at risk if beetle activity continues. Effects on other stands and residual trees are discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.1.

219.27 (b)(5): "Avoid permanent impairment of site productivity and ensure conservation of soil and water resources."

SWCPs implemented in project design and contract initiation are designed to minimize impacts to site productivity and ensure conservation of soil and water resources. These are

discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.7, and Appendix D. Contract provisions will be used that implement SWCPs, such as designated skid trails, landings, waterbars, etc.

219.27 (b)(6): "Provide the desired effects on water quantity and quality, wildlife and fish habitat and other resource yields".

Harvesting in the Action Alternatives would have no significant additive effects compared to the increases in water yield predicted under no action. Affects to water quality and fish habitat would be negligible from the Action Alternatives, due to the implementation of the required SWCPs and design features.

219.27 (b)(7): "Be practical in terms of transportation and harvesting requirements, and total cost of preparation, logging, and administration."

The transportation and harvest methods described are capable of being implemented, based on the Silvicultural information and transportation plan and feasibility report (see planning record). The economic analysis as outlined in Chapter 4 demonstrates that all costs are within expected revenues.

### **Silvicultural Practices**

219.27 (c)(1): "No timber harvesting shall occur on lands classified as not suited for timber production pursuant to 219.14 except for salvage sales. These lands shall continue to be treated for reforestation purposes if necessary to achieve the multiple-use objectives of the plan."

This has been discussed under the section 3.1 Forest Vegetation. Based on discussions in this section, all harvest activities proposed are in full compliance with this management requirement.

219.27 (c)(2): "The selected sale schedule provides the allowable sale quantity for the first planning period. Within the planning period, the volume of timber to be sold in any one year may exceed the annual allowable sale quantity so long as the total amount does not exceed the allowable sale quantity. Nothing in this paragraph prohibits salvage or sanitation harvesting of timber stands which are substantially damaged by fire, windthrow, or other catastrophe, or which are in imminent danger of insect or disease attack and where such harvests are consistent with silvicultural and environmental standards. Such timber may either substitute for timber that would otherwise be sold under the plan or, if not feasible, be sold over and above the planned volume."

Volume to be sold under the Action Alternatives would contribute to the allowable sale quantity (ASQ) for the first planning period for the Forest Plan. Sale of any volume proposed under the Action Alternatives would not result in exceeding the ASQ of 3.8 MMBF annually for the planning period. The Forest has not sold more than 100,000 BF/year of volume that contributes to the ASQ in the past 3 years.

Volumes sold off lands classified as unsuited for timber harvest would not contribute to the ASQ. Refer to "Forest Land Suitability" for acres classified as unsuitable.

219.27 (c)(3): "When trees are cut to achieve timber production objectives, the cuttings shall be made in such a way as to assure that the technology and knowledge exists to adequately restock

the lands within five years after final harvest. Research and experience shall be the basis for determining whether the harvest and regeneration practices planned can be expected to result in adequate restocking".

NFMA requires that timber be harvested from National Forest Systems lands only where there is assurance that such lands can be adequately restocked within five years of final harvest (16 U.S.C. 1604).

Experience from forests of similar elevation and habitat types indicates stands in the project area requiring regeneration activity following implementation of the Proposed Action, or other Action Alternatives, can be successfully regenerated in accordance with the National Forest Management Act (NFMA 1976) requirements.

Monitoring would be used to assess the success of regeneration efforts following project completion. Desired results and forest plan standards would be specifically stated in the detailed silvicultural prescriptions written for each area. The details of the monitoring plan are in Appendix D.

219.27 (c)(4): "Cultural treatments such as thinning, weeding and other partial cutting may be included in the forest plan where they are intended to increase the rate of growth of remaining trees, favor commercially valuable tree species, favor species age classes which are most valuable for wildlife, or achieve other multiple-use objectives."

The action alternatives includes commercial thinning (selection), partial cutting (patch groups), and release and weeding cultural treatments which are in compliance with the objectives stated in 219.27 (c)(4) and Forest Plan standards and guidelines.

219.27 (c)(5): "Harvest levels based on intensified management practices shall be decreased no later than the end of each planning period if such practices cannot be completed substantially as planned."

This applies to Forest Plan level decisions, not to project level decisions.

219.27(c)(6): "Timber harvest cuts designed to regenerate an even-aged stand of timber shall be carried out in a manner consistent with the protection of soil, watershed, fish ...resources, and the regeneration of the timber resource".

The action alternatives include even-aged silvicultural treatments ranging from 5-40 acres. Design features have been included to protect the regeneration and other resources.

219.27 (c)(7): "Timber harvest and other silvicultural treatments shall be used to prevent potential damaging population increases of forest pest organisms. Silvicultural treatments shall not be applied where such treatments would make stands susceptible to pest-caused damage levels inconsistent with management objectives."

The purpose and need for this action is defined 1) to cooperate with local government agencies to permit them to provide continued and more efficient collection and removal of water to the Monticello and Blanding municipal water system for public uses; 2) to improve the transportation system; and 3) to move towards restoration of the ecological structure, function process, and composition of the spruce and aspen component of the project area (see Chapter 1 - Purpose and Need for complete descriptions).

### **Even-Aged Management**

***OPTIMIZATION OF CLEARCUTTING:*** The National Forest Management Act states that clearcutting is to be used on National Forest System lands only where it is determined to be the optimum method.

The Manti-La Sal National Forest has interpreted this requirement to mean that clearcutting would be used only where it is consistent with the Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and where it would accomplish Forest Plan objectives that cannot be accomplished through other harvest methods.

The action alternatives include harvesting of patch cuts of one to five acres in size in spruce-fir stands on approximately 20 percent on 808 acres in order to diversify the stand structure. The Forest Plan considers clearcutting to be 10 acres or more (p. III-27). Consequently, no clearcutting is provided for in any of the spruce-fir stands within the action alternatives. However, the action alternatives include 192 acres of clearcuts in aspen and mixed conifer stands that range from 5-40 acres in size. Clearcutting in these stands is consistent with the Forest Plan standards and guidelines. All the created openings will be regenerated within five years through natural and artificial regeneration methods, as well as utilizing existing advanced regeneration.

***APPROPRIATENESS OF EVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT:*** The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) places special requirements on the use of even-aged silviculture systems on National Forest Systems lands. This is contained in NFMA (16 USC 1604 (g)(3), (F) and (i)) which states that "cuts designed to regenerate an even-aged stand of timber would be used as a cutting method only where such cutting is determined to be appropriate, to meet the objectives and requirements of relevant land management plan."

Refer to the discussion in the previous paragraph.

219.27 (d)(1): "Openings shall be located to achieve the desired combination of multiple-use objectives. Regional Guides shall provide guidance on dispersion of openings. As a minimum, openings in forest stands are no longer considered openings once a new forest is established. Forest plans may set forth variations to this minimum based on site-specific requirements for achieving multiple-use objectives. Regional guides shall provide guidance for determining variations to this minimum in the Forest Plan".

Refer to the discussion under 219.27 (d)(2), below.

219.27 (d)(2): "Individual cut blocks, patches, or strips shall conform to the maximum size limits for areas to be cut in one harvest operation established by the Regional Guide. This limit may be less than, but will not exceed, 40 acres for all other forest types except as provided in paragraphs (d)(2)(i) through (iii) of this section. (i)- Cut openings larger than those specified may be permitted where larger units will produce a more desirable combination of net public benefits (ii)- Size limits exceeding those established in paragraphs (d)(2) and (d)(2)(i) of this section are permitted on an individual timber sale basis after 60 days' notice and review by the Regional Forester, (iii)- The established limit shall not apply to the size of areas harvested as a result of natural catastrophic condition such as fire, insect and disease attack, or windstorm."

The Regional Guide for the Intermountain Region (1984), page 3-21, states "An opening created in the Forest by application of even-aged management that exceeds 40 acres will require Regional Forester approval. Where such openings exceed 60 acres in size to produce a more desirable combination of net public benefits, they will be subject to a 60-day public review, except where a catastrophe exists. Regional Forester review and approval is required for harvesting larger units under catastrophic conditions. Appropriate public notice will also be given.... (e) Evidence of a catastrophic condition must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Forester, if created openings will exceed 60 acres.

The Forest Vegetation Simulator (FVS) was used to project vegetation structural stages to estimate potential effects resulting from high levels of spruce mortality on stand structure and of the action alternatives (see planning record). No openings would be greater than 40 acres within any of the proposed treatment units.

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